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to call the attention of the Society to the most valuable donation which Dr. Hunt had presented, consisting of 119 volumes, chiefly on African travel. This would form the nucleus of a library which would eventually prove of the highest value to Fellows, and he had much pleasure in moving "That the best thanks of the Society be given to Dr. Hunt for the liberal and valuable donation which he has presented to the Society's library."

Mr. G. WITT seconded the motion, which was carried by acclamation.

Dr. HUNT, after thanking the Society, said that he had long felt the necessity that anthropologists should possess a good reference library, and that it gave him great pleasure to assist in its formation. He hoped that other members would feel an equal interest in the subject. The Royal Society of Literature had offered a desirable suite of apartments for a library and museum, and he hoped that the increase of members during the next few months would enable the Council to accept this offer.

The PRESIDENT then declared the proceedings to be at an end.

JANUARY 19TH, 1864.

JAMES HUNT, ESQ., PRESIDENT, IN THE CHAIR.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The following Fellows were elected: William Easse, Esq.; Henry Butler, Esq.; Philip Lybbe Powys Lybbe, Esq., M.P.; Robert C. Marsden, Esq.

The Extinction of Races. By RICHARD LEE, B.A., F.A.S.L., M.R.C.S.

The rapid disappearance of aboriginal tribes before the advance of civilisation is one of the many remarkable incidents of the present age. In every new country, from America to New Zealand, from Freemantle to Honolulu, it is observable, and seems to be a necessary result of an approximation of different races, peculiar, however, in degree, at least, to this portion of the world's history. It has been estimated that the Hawaiians have been reduced as much as eighty-five per cent. during the last hundred years. The natives of Tasmania are almost, if not quite, extinct. The Maories are passing away at the rate of about twenty five per cent. every fourteen years, and in Australia, as in America, whole tribes have disappeared before the advance of the white man.

Looking back into history, it would appear that such circumstances have not always been the consequence even of enduring oppression, still less of civilisation. Two millions of the Coptic race still testify to the inability of the ancient Eastern powers to destroy all remnants of the people they subdued. Egypt numbers a vast crowd of the lineal descendants of those men who fell before the Persian tyrant two thousand years ago; and, to come nearer home, the Celts, the Britons,

and the ancient Gauls, have a large host of worthy representatives upon their own soil.

Nowhere has the disappearance of a native race been more complete in modern times than in Tasmania, and although, no doubt, the most relentless butcheries were at one time practised in that colony, yet, for many years past, the aborigines have been under the immediate protection of the government. It would be impossible now to determine accurately the extent of the loss that has taken place, but it may be reached approximatively. In 1815 the aborigines of Van Diemen's Land were estimated at 5000, and this was probably a lower calculation than might have been justified. Five years later so great was the slaughter practised by the early settlers, that this number had become reduced to 340, of whom 160 were females. In 1831, the year in which they were invited to place themselves under the protection of the local authorities, after these same authorities had sought and failed to destroy them by a military force, there were but 196; and their numbers continued as rapidly to decline. In that year fifty-four were sent to the establishment devoted to them at Flinder's Island; in 1832 sixty-three more gave themselves up; and in the three following years eighty-nine were added to the group. This comprised the native aboriginal population of the island at the time. But during the five years thus included, seventy-three had died on the station, so that government protection did not lessen the mortality. In 1847 the whole of the party were removed from Flinder's Island to an old convict station on the shores of D'Entrecasteaux's Channel, to the south of Hobart Town; there were then only forty-seven, and of those but thirteen men. In 1855 the numbers were further reduced, and the once numerous tribes of Van Diemen's Land had only sixteen representatives. Of these, two were sixteen years of age, and the rest varied from thirty to fifty-five.

This remarkable result cannot be attributed altogether to the low condition of the Tasmanian Aborigines, or to the cruel treatment of the European settlers. A similar process of extinction is even now taking place in New Zealand, notwithstanding the thinness of the white population, and the superior character of the Maori race; and so steadily is this going on, that before the end of another hundred years the aboriginal New Zealander will, in all probability, have become extinct.

When missionaries first went out to New Zealand, the native population was variously estimated by them at from 100,000 to 140,000; but these estimates were necessarily made under considerable difficulties and probably never exceeded the truth. The first official census was not taken till 1858, and in that year the number was found to be hardly more than 56,000.

From this it is evident that there are some causes in operation to produce an extinction of certain races which at present cannot be clearly defined. The average mortality among them is greater than among most civilised nations; but in addition to that, and to the diminished reproduction of the species, there has been shown to be an inequality of the sexes among the adult population in an inverse ratio to that usually obtaining.

Out of several tribes, numbering nearly 40,000 persons, it has been ascertained that the proportion of males to females under fourteen years of age, was as 5·974 to 4·860, and above fourteen it was as 16·443 to 11·989.

These facts open up an interesting field for inquiry, both to the philanthropist and the philosopher. It is startling to observe the sudden disappearance before an advance of civilisation of people who have multiplied and lived for ages upon lands now for the first time occupied by the white man. Nor is the circumstance divested of any of its interest, when it is made tolerably evident that other than purely artificial causes are operating to produce such a result. The introduction among aboriginal races of some European diseases, and of injurious habits—intemperance and the like—as well as a directly increased mortality, due to an antagonism between the white and the coloured population, are among the leading artificial causes; but none of these will account for the paradox that exists in respect to the inequality of the sexes, the unusual diminution of females, and the increase to such an enormous extent of unproductive marriages. For an explanation of all this we must look deeper; and it is more than a question whether at the present time anything like a satisfactory explanation can be offered.

There is, however, one condition into which native tribes are brought through contact with civilisation that has hitherto been overlooked, but which the writer has observed to be frequently productive of fatal effects among tribes where the observations have been chiefly made. It is well known, for example, that the Australian aborigines, although constantly exposed to the weather, are exceedingly susceptible to cold. Before a southerly wind they crouch under every cover they can find, the insufficient quality, as well as quantity of their food, offering no protection to their system against the vicissitudes of temperature, which, in that part of the world, are often very great. The influx of Europeans has enabled them, though to a limited degree, to procure articles of clothing or blankets, the value of which they at times thoroughly appreciate. But the first warm day sees all these things thrown aside, and it not unfrequently happens that fever and other diseases are actually produced through the careless use or disuse of warm coverings. Deaths arising from this cause are now of frequent occurrence; the system which, in its natural state, was prone to suffer from changes of temperature, being still more liable to injury when those changes are rendered greater through the improper use of clothes.

As an almost abstract question for discussion, it may be suggested whether this disappearance of aboriginal tribes may be taken as a type of what might happen at a future period of the world's history—at that period which some have even now conceived to be probable, when the present population shall have to give place to an order of beings superior to the now dominant race of mankind in all those faculties and endowments which most tend to elevate humanity. Glancing over the surface of the globe, and pausing for a moment to contemplate the mighty changes that have been wrought during the

last half century in the population of different regions, such a suggestion may not seem so very improbable. Almost everywhere, save in the older and more civilised nations, we see, as it were, one world of people passing off the stage, and another, and a more highly developed world coming on. In a few years the surface of the earth will be utterly altered; whole races, which now rule supreme over immense tracks, will have passed away for ever, and civilisation will turn to better account the lands that have so long been the undisturbed home of the "black fellow;" a new era will be inaugurated, and human responsibilities vastly multiplied.

Such being a process now in course of completion, the question proposed becomes at least an interesting one. Europe is now the centre from which this flood of civilised life is overspreading the globe, and our own Anglo-Saxon race constitutes one of the chief elements which are sweeping before them every vestige of earlier inhabitants. Such a world-wide reform has never before occurred, but may it not, at some far distant date, occur again? Europe, now pre-eminent in all the attainments of man—the home and the cradle of the noblest arts and the profoundest sciences, may have for her destiny to repopulate the globe, and then to tarry in her onward career. It may be the lot of nations now springing into existence at the antipodes, to outstrip her in the pursuit of knowledge, and when ages shall have passed away, to supply, in their turn, a nobler race, a more perfect humanity, to the lands which now rank foremost in civilisation. The New Zealand offspring of the imagination of our great essayist may be no unreal creation of the imagination, and England may yet be indebted to her descendants in the South for a people who shall as far surpass her present occupants as the civilised Englishman of this day excels the half barbarous Maori.

To speculate upon this, however, is of little value so far as affects the attainment of any satisfactory conclusion. Perhaps it is a pity to spoil so fine a field for the exercise of the imagination, to break the spell which builds up in the mind attractive hypotheses of the world's future history, and to destroy what might serve as an analogy in thus reasoning. But, viewed as a bare fact, and taking it in connexion with what we know of the previous history of man from earliest ages to the present time, there appears nothing, I think, in this extinction of races to justify us in regarding it as a type of anything similar to follow at some remote period in the future.

Between the white and the coloured populations of which we speak there are not even degrees of civilisation. The man who now wanders free through the unknown wilds of Australia represents nothing. Not only has he not advanced in moral development since the first formation of his species, but he has actually retrograded. There are not even the traditions of past renown among his ancestors to arouse those inspiring emotions which should stimulate him to preserve the existence and identity of his race; and even where, as in the Maori or Polynesian, a certain pride of birth and dignity still cling, there is no bond, certainly not one of nationality, to secure them from the inevitable effects which greater moral power, under such circum-

stances, seems intended to produce. Rather, then, we must regard it as only an illustration of humanity, in its crudest form, shrinking and passing away before a phase of humanity enlightened with intelligence, and endowed with vast intellectual superiority. It is the lesser light destroying the darkness, and though a greater brilliancy should ages hence appear, it will still continue to burn, mellowed and made more luminous through the accumulated experiences of time.

*On the Extinction of Races.** By T. BENDYSHE, Esq., M.A., F.A.S.L.

THE continent of America has now been discovered about four hundred years. The groups of the islands of Polynesia or Oceania about two hundred years. The continent of Australia, and the neighbouring islands of New Zealand, Tasmania, etc., about a century.

Most, if not all of these countries, on their discovery by the Europeans, contained a larger number of aboriginal inhabitants than they do at present. Hence it has been concluded, with, I think, some unphilosophical haste, that the numbers of the aborigines must in all these countries continue to decline until none of them are left. And even before we can call the extinction of races a fact, theories of various kinds have been started to account for what has never yet taken place, at least in a sufficient number of instances to determine whether it is an exceptional or a strictly natural phenomenon.

There can be no reason for assuming in the outset that the laws of population are different in different parts of the globe. This may seem an unnecessary truism; but had it been borne in mind by many writers on this subject, much idle speculation would have been avoided. We must not, however, be too hard upon the earlier observers of the aborigines.

It is only recently that the laws of population have been understood or even studied in our own country. The treatise of Malthus, from the publication of which are to be dated all sound views upon the subject, appeared in 1798. He showed that population has a tendency to increase in a geometrical ratio; and the obstacles which prevent it from actually so increasing, except what he calls moral restraint, which is peculiar to civilised nations, occur equally in all parts of the world. These may be summed up under the heads of promiscuous intercourse, artificial abortion, infanticide, wars, diseases and poverty. In every country some of these checks are with more or less force in constant operation; yet, notwithstanding their general prevalence, there are few states in which there is not a constant effort of the population to increase beyond the means of subsistence. During such seasons as these, the discouragements to marriage and the difficulties of rearing a family are so great, that population is nearly at a stand. After some time, however, either from the actual diminution of the population, or the increase of the means of subsistence, the restraints to population are in some degree lessened, and after a short period again the same retrograde and progressive movements are repeated. This sort of oscillation, says he, will not

* Perhaps the title ought rather to be the Extinction of Populations.